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rest of the evening through without further attempts at playfulness, retiring to the seclusion that my cabin granted an hour later, resolved never again to serve as presiding elder at a vaudeville show either on land or sea.

I felt almost as solemnly embarrassed as I did one evening in Pennsylvania, later, when my lecture was opened with prayer and I heard a good clergyman begging the Lord to "show His mercy upon the audience gathered here," to "protect them from all suffering, and in His infinite wisdom, if it were His will, to enable the speaker of the evening to rise to his opportunity."

BUT there was an after result of that Martini jest which more than made up for the depression that followed its failure to strike home. I write of it, however, with some diffidence; for I am convinced that some reader somewhere will observe that the incident is only another variation of Senator Depew's famous tale of the Englishman who wanted to know what really was the matter with the mince pie. As a matter of fact it is the twin brother of that famous anecdote's; but, while I am perfectly willing to think the Depew story really happened, I know that mine did, and I therefore record it.

The morning following the impromptu concert I was pacing the deck of the steamer when one of the more distinguished passengers aboard, an English army officer, who occupied at that time, and still holds, an important post in British military circles, stopped me.

"Mr. Bangs," he said, holding out his hand, "I want to thank you for a charming evening last night, and to express my admiration for the delightful way in which you carried off your difficult honors. It was really most interesting."

"Thank you, General," said I. "That is very nice to hear. I thought it fell rather flat."

"Not at all, not at all," he rejoined; "though, to speak quite frankly, there was one of your jests that I—I didn't really get. What humor you have, Sir, I think I appreciate. During a period of convalescence in the Transvaal somebody sent me a copy of your 'House Boat on the Styx,' and I—I found it very amusing; but this

joke last night—after the little chap had sung that ballad—about the dying veteran you know—it quite escaped me. Er—what would they bring an American soldier who called for a Martini?"

"Well, General," said I, restraining an impulse to be amused, "I might explain, and explain and explain the point to you, giving you a chart in full detail, exploiting the theory of the thing as fully as possible, without satisfactory results. It is a case where an object lesson will demonstrate in a minute what no amount of abstract argument could convey in a year. If you will come with me into the smoking room, I'll show you exactly what nine out of ten people in America would give to a soldier crying aloud for a Martini."

We repaired accordingly to the smoking room, and in response to my order the steward shortly placed two misty Martini cocktails before us.

"There, General," said I, "that's what!" He gazed at the Martinis, and then he fixed his handsome eyes on me. There was a twinkle in them, and after he had swallowed the object lesson he leaned over with a broad smile and spoke.

"I am very much afraid, Mr. Bangs," said he, "that that idea you Americans have that we British are sometimes a trifle sluggish in the perception of the subtler points of an American jest, bristling as they often do with latent significance, is not altogether without justification. In order to show you how completely, how fully, I appreciate the excellence of your witticism I would suggest that we have two more."

I draw no conclusions of an invidious nature from this little episode; for I recall with pain, and some contrition, an American audience in a prohibition section of one of our Eastern States before whom I had the hardihood to tell that story on a hot summer night three years ago, only one of whose six hundred members saw the point, and he didn't dare laugh for fear that by doing so he might risk his reputation for sobriety—or so he informed me for my consolation later in the evening.

"Slings and Arrows," the next part of Mr. Bangs' reminiscences, will appear in an early issue.

FLOWER OF THE GORSE

Continued from page 5

the look of bewilderment on her father's face when he had mastered its contents.

"I take back everything I said, or even thought, about Sainte Barbe," he cried. "Learn how she has squelched me! The proprietor of the chief hotel at Le Pouldu offers four hundred francs for a picture of the Plage with his hotel in the center. Certainly four hundred is a heap short of a thousand, which was the sum I named to her Saintship; but then, a *hôte* isn't a dealer, and he promises to pay cash if the sketch is delivered in a week, because he wants it for a summer poster. Yvonne, have you finished breakfast? Run and find Peridot, there's a dear, and ask him if we can sail to Le Pouldu this morning. It'll save time to go by sea, and the tide will serve, I know. If Peridot says the weather is all right, drop in at Julia's, and invite Tollemache. We'll lunch gloriously with my hotel man, rub in the best part of the drawing afterward, and be back here in good time for the feast."

YVONNE hurried out. The hour was half-past eight, and the tide in the estuary of the Aven was already on the ebb. But she had not far to go. The Rue Mathias (nowadays glorified by a much more ambitious name) was not a minute's walk from the bridge that gives the village its name. Another minute brought her to the quay, where the brawling river escapes from its last millwheel, and tumbles joyously into tidal water. She was lucky. Peridot was there, mending a blue sardine net, a natty, square-shouldered sailor, unusually fair for a Breton, though his blond hair was French enough in its bristliness, as a section of his scalp would have provided a first-rate clothes brush. He touched his cap with a smile when she appeared, and in answer to her query raised to the heavens those gray-green eyes which had earned him such a euphonious nickname.

"Yes, Mademoiselle Yvonne, we can make Le Pouldu by ten o'clock with this wind," he said. "We may get a wetting; but it won't be the first. Is—er—is Madeleine coming?"

"Not today. She promised to help Mère Pitou with tonight's supper. You will be there?"

"Wind and weather permitting, Ma'm'selle. We go in your own boat, I suppose?"

"Yes. Can you allow fifteen minutes?"

"There will be plenty of water for the next half-hour."

Yvonne raced off again, this time to the

Hotel Julia: not the huge modern annex that dominates the tiny marketplace of Pont Aven, but the oldtime hostelry itself, tucked in snugly behind its four sycamores, like some sedate matron ever peering up in wonderment at its overgrown child across the street. In winter the habitués—the coterie of artists and writers who cluster under the wing of the famous Julia Guillou—eat in the dining room of the smaller hotel.

Crossing the terrace, a graveled part of the square shielded by the trees, Yvonne met Mademoiselle Julia herself, bustling forth to inspect eggs, poultry, and buckets of fish. This kindly, outspoken, resourceful-looking woman has tended, and housed, and helped at least two generations of painters. In her way she has done more for art than many academics.

"Is Monsieur Tollemache at breakfast, Mademoiselle?" inquired Yvonne.

Julia smiled broadly. Evidently it was the most natural thing imaginable that the pretty American girl, known to everyone in the village, should be asking the whereabouts of the youngster who would never be an artist, but was one of the hotel's valued guests.

"Oui, ma chérie! I heard him shouting to Marie for three boiled eggs not so long ago. Out of three eggs one hatches a good meal. And how is your father? I haven't set eyes on him this week."

"He is so busy, Mademoiselle. There is so little daylight."

"Bring him to dinner on Sunday. We're roasting two of the biggest geese you ever saw."

"He will be delighted, I'm sure."

Then Julia marched to conquer the vendors of eatables. There would be a terrific argument; but the founder of modern Pont Aven would prevail.

YVONNE looked in through an open window of a delightful room, paneled in oak—on every panel a picture bearing a signature more or less eminent in the world of color. Tollemache was there, tapping his third egg.

"Lorry," she said, "Father and I are sailing to Le Pouldu. Will you come?"

"Will a duck swim?" was the prompt reply. "When do we start?"

"Soon. Be at the quay in ten minutes."

"By the clock. Plenty of oilskins in the locker?"

"Yes."

She sped away. A Frenchman, an artist



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